

# Breakfast Assessment

*Breakfast assessment forms for students, parents and teachers are included in this lesson. These forms are intended to assess breakfast eating patterns of students and their relationship to classroom behavior and performance. Parents' interest in their children's participation in the School Breakfast Program is also assessed. It's useful to conduct an assessment prior to approaching school decision makers with a request to support a School Breakfast Program.*



- To assess students' current breakfast intake
- To evaluate the need for a School Breakfast Program based on the breakfast assessment



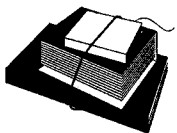
**Target  
Audience**

- Teachers, parents and students



**Time**

Preparation time: 10-15 minutes to review the material and copy handouts. It will take several days for students, parents and teachers to fill out assessment forms. You will then need to collect all of the information and interpret it.



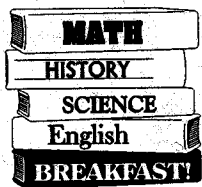
**Materials**

Handouts: Cover Letters to Parents and Teachers  
Student Breakfast Assessment  
Parent Breakfast Assessment for Children  
Student Breakfast Assessment Summary Form/Instructions  
Teacher Breakfast Assessment  
What's Happening in Our School?



**Script**

Develop as needed



# SCHOOL Breakfast

for  
first class learning!

School breakfast should be the first class children have at the beginning of the day. Breakfast is essential for learning. As a food service professional, you play a big role in making children ready to learn at the start of the school day. Many children do not eat breakfast for a variety of reasons or they eat an inadequate breakfast which leaves them hungry by the time school starts.

Every school is different and may be at different stages of implementing a breakfast program. Maybe you see a need for breakfast but need to convince others in your community. This lesson will help you assess the eating habits of children to determine the need for a breakfast program in your school. This lesson includes:

- Parent Breakfast Assessment for Children
- Student Breakfast Assessment
- Student Breakfast Assessment Summary Form and Instructions
- Teacher Breakfast Assessment

Now you can use the forms to assess children's eating habits:

1. Decide on the grades/classes to be surveyed. Identify those grades/classes about which you are most concerned or where there is a high level of interest.
2. Copy the appropriate forms as needed. Copy the cover letter on your school stationary. The Student Assessment Form is appropriate for children older than 10. If the children are younger than 10, the Parent Breakfast Assessment for Children is appropriate.
3. If possible "talk breakfast up" with teachers. Inform administrators of your intent to evaluate the children's eating habits and the need for a breakfast program.
4. Distribute the appropriate forms along with a cover letter to each class being surveyed.
5. Collect the forms and tabulate the children's eating habits on the Student Breakfast Assessment Summary Form by following the instructions.
6. Rate the breakfasts and plug the information into *What's Happening in Our School*. Include this information in the *First Class Learning* presentation to school decision makers so that they will recognize the need for a School Breakfast Program in your district.

**Dear Parent:**

**Are your children fueled with a balanced breakfast and ready to learn by the time school starts? Unfortunately, many children are skipping breakfast and aren't ready to learn when the bell rings. Students skip breakfast for a variety of reasons. Regardless of the reason, hungry children don't learn.**

**The food service staff is interested in evaluating the eating habits of your children to assess the need for a School Breakfast Program. Please fill out the attached form and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.**

**If you are interested in ensuring that all children are fed and ready to learn, please feel free to contact me. I need your support in starting a breakfast program in our school.**

**Sincerely,**

**Food Service Director**

Dear Teacher:

Are your students fueled with a balanced breakfast and ready to learn when school starts? Do you observe behavior problems that are likely caused by the child's being hungry? Do your students stare off into space at the beginning of class or ask to be excused to go see the nurse due to a headache or stomachache? If any of this has happened, it could be because the child is hungry. Hungry children have difficulty concentrating, tend to be disruptive and they don't learn.

The food service staff would like to help alleviate this problem. We would like to assess the student's eating habits to determine how many students are coming to school ready to learn. Attached is an assessment for you to fill out that will help us meet the needs of hungry children.

We will provide a summary of the assessment. If you are interested in learning more about the breakfast program or would like to join a task force to deal with this issue, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Food Service Director

# Student Breakfast Assessment

Please fill out the assessment so we can learn about breakfast eating habits.

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many times per week do you eat breakfast? None 1-2 3-4 5-6 7

2. If you don't eat breakfast everyday, why not? (Circle the reasons)

Overslept

Not hungry

Too busy

Visiting with friends

Left home too early

No Food

Dieting/weight control

Disliked available foods

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where do you eat breakfast? (Circle one or more)

Home

School

Restaurant

Child care center

Car or bus

Friend's or  
relative's house

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. If you don't eat the breakfast offered at school, explain why.

5. What do you eat or drink before school starts each day?

Cereal, toast, or other breads \_\_\_\_\_

Fruit, vegetable, or juice \_\_\_\_\_

Milk or other dairy \_\_\_\_\_

Eggs, meat, beans, peanut butter \_\_\_\_\_

Other foods \_\_\_\_\_

Other beverages \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!

# Parent Breakfast Assessment for Children

We are asking for your help in evaluating the breakfast habits of school-age children. Please answer these questions. Have your child(ren) return the form to their teacher(s) tomorrow.

1. How many children do you have in our school? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What grades are they in? (Each letter represents a different child)  
A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many times per week do your children eat breakfast? None 1-2 3-4 5-6 7
4. If your child(ren) ever skip breakfast on a school day, check the items that apply to each child in the appropriate box.

	Child A	Child B	Child C	Child D	Child E
Overslept					
Not Hungry					
Busy with Morning Activities					
Bus or Ride Comes Too Early					
No Food for Breakfast					
Socialize Instead of Eat					
Dieting/Weight Control					
Dislike Foods Available					
Other (Specify)					

5. Where does each child eat breakfast? (Place the corresponding letter(s) in the appropriate box.)

Home:	School:	Restaurant:	Child care center:
Car or Bus:	Friend or relative's house:	Other:	

6. What do your children generally eat or drink for breakfast? (Check the items that apply to each child in the appropriate box.)

	Child A	Child B	Child C	Child D	Child E
Cereal, Toast or Other Breads					
Fruit, Vegetable, or Juice					
Milk or Other Dairy					
Eggs, Meat, Beans, Peanut Butter					
Other Foods					
Other Beverages					

7. If our school offered breakfast (free or reduced priced breakfasts would be available to all eligible children), would you want your children to eat breakfast at school?

Yes Sometimes/Maybe No

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

## Instructions for Completing the Student Breakfast Assessment Summary Form

This form is for food service staff or teachers to use after all of the student breakfast assessment forms have been received. The summary will help determine how many children are eating breakfast on a regular basis, why breakfast is skipped, where it is eaten and if the breakfast is adequate or inadequate.

1. Complete one column of the summary form for each student by filling in their responses from the Student Breakfast Assessment Form or the Parent Assessment Form for Children, whichever was used. (Make copies of the summary form as needed to accommodate classes larger than the number of columns.)
2. For question 1, use a check to indicate how many times per week breakfast was eaten.
3. For question 2, use a check to indicate the reason(s) for not eating breakfast.
4. For question 3, use a check to indicate where the student usually eats breakfast.
5. For question 4, put a check in the appropriate box for each item selected from each food group.
  - A. Cereal, toast, other breads
  - B. Fruit, vegetable or juice
  - C. Milk or other dairy
  - D. Eggs, meat, beans, peanut butter
6. For question 5, rate each student's breakfast as adequate or inadequate. An adequate breakfast rating is when a child ate from at least two of the food groups and had a total of three different foods. Place an A in the box for adequate and an I in the box for inadequate. Total the amount of inadequate breakfasts eaten.

**Total**

**Total**

**Total**



# Teacher Breakfast Assessment

**Please complete after your class has filled out the Student Breakfast Assessment and return to the Food Service Director.**

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Number in Class: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many of the students in your class completed the breakfast assessment?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How many did not eat breakfast at least once a week? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you think skipping breakfast or eating an inadequate breakfast has any effect on the child's ability to learn?      Yes      No
4. If yes, do you feel this is happening in your class?
5. What types of behavior have you observed in your students that may be a result of skipping breakfast or eating an inadequate breakfast?

Students are sluggish, tired, sleepy \_\_\_\_\_

Students complain of headaches or stomachaches \_\_\_\_\_

Students are disruptive \_\_\_\_\_

Students have a difficult time staying on task \_\_\_\_\_

Students behave better after eating something \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What can you do about students' breakfast behavior/habits in your school?

- Encourage students to eat an adequate breakfast before school.
- Educate parents on the importance of breakfast to their child's learning and health.
- Join a committee or task force to set up a School Breakfast Program at your school or promote the School Breakfast Program if your school already has one.

Thank You!

# What's Happening in Our School?

\_\_\_\_\_ % of students who do not eat breakfast on a regular basis

\_\_\_\_\_ % of students who come to school having eaten an inadequate breakfast and are not ready to learn.

Students mainly eat breakfast at the following places:

Breakfast usually consists of:

Behavior of students observed by teachers that may be a result of skipping breakfast or eating an inadequate breakfast: